Constituent Engagement Related to Use of AI

Administration for Children and Families
Generic for Engagement Efforts

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Supporting Statement Part B

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Overview of Study Objectives

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation proposes to collect information to better understand human services field constituents' wants and needs related to the use of artificial intelligence (AI), particularly relating to the administration of public benefits and services.

The primary purpose of this information collection is to obtain rapid ACF constituent input and feedback on prioritization efforts related to:

- ACF's position and response to HHS-level mandates on AI, including the following requirements from EO 14110:
  - Identifying and prioritizing what guidance and support the human services field wants and needs related to use of AI, particularly relating to administration of public benefits and services per E.O 14110 Section 7.2(b)(i);
  - Providing human service perspectives to an HHS strategic plan on AI, per E.O 14110 Section 8 (b)(i);
- Informing ACF's AI strategy and ongoing constituent engagement channels.

The gathered information will be used to develop an internal memo synthesizing findings from constituent engagement. This memo will be used to inform ACF's AI strategy and determine on which topics to issue guidance on the use of AI to ACF grantees.

The three proposed instruments that will include minimal statistical analyses include the following:
- Instrument 3: Survey of AI opinions—participants
- Instrument 4: Survey of AI opinions—nonparticipants
- Instrument 5: Screener for participants

As such, this document primarily focuses on these three instruments with general descriptive information provided for the other two instruments, which are protocols to support focus groups.

1. **Respondent Universe and Sampling Methods**

    Target Population
    - For focus groups using Instrument 1, the target population is state leaders, local leaders, and frontline service providers from a range of human services programs
    - For focus groups using Instrument 2, the target population is participants in a diverse set of public benefit programs
    - For the Survey of AI opinions—participants (Instrument 3) the target population is participants in a diverse set of public benefit programs.
    - For the Survey of AI opinions—nonparticipants (Instrument 4) the target population is state leaders, local leaders, and frontline service providers from a range of human services programs.
    - The Screener for participants (Instrument 5) is for potential public benefit program participants who might meet the eligibility criteria to participate in focus groups using instrument 2 or the Survey of AI opinions—participants (Instrument 3). A recruiting

panel will use this screener to identify eligible program participants, who will then be invited to participate in the focus group and/or take the survey.

Sampling and Site Selection

The contractor will conduct focus groups (Instruments 1 and 2), surveys (Instruments 3 and 4), and screening (Instrument 5) with purposive samples of the target population. The Contractor will attempt to recruit a respondent group that has a diversity of racial/ethnic backgrounds, geographic locations (primarily rural/urban), and roles within public benefits programs. However, ACF and its contractor do not intend to use a formal sampling method to achieve this.

Appropriateness of Study Design and Methods for Planned Uses

The data collected will be used to inform ACF's AI strategy and determine on which topics to issue guidance on the use of AI to ACF grantees. The information is purely descriptive in nature; the data are not intended to be representative of the opinions of all public benefits programs or their enrollees. These limitations will be included in any written products resulting from this data collection.

This information is not intended to be used as the principal basis for public policy decisions and is not expected to meet the threshold of influential or highly influential scientific information.

2. **Procedures for Collection of Information**

Data Collection Processes

- ACF and its contractor will field one online survey of AI opinions for participants (Instrument 3) and one for nonparticipants (Instrument 4) using Qualtrics. ACF hopes to receive approximately 400 complete surveys consisting of approximately 300 from state leaders and other program non-participants, and 100 from program participants.
- ACF's contractor will administer one online screener to potential public benefit program participants to determine whether they are eligible to participate in a focus group (Instrument 2) and/or complete a Survey of AI opinions (Instrument 3). The contractor anticipates administering the screener to 280 people.

Data Handling

Focus group data (instruments 1 and 2) will be collected using the Zoom meeting platform (instrument 1) and meeting technology provided by SAGO (instrument 2). Recordings from focus group meetings will be stored securely on the contractor's website server, using federally approved data encryption. Transcripts developed from recordings will remove any names or other personally identifying information to protect the privacy of respondents. Access to recordings and transcripts from focus group meetings will be restricted to authorized Contractor study team members. Transcripts will be shared with ACF using secure platforms for data transfer.

Survey data (instruments 3 and 4) will be collected using the Qualtrics platform, which will be hosted on the ACF website. Survey respondents will complete the survey online and all data will be securely stored on ACF's website server, using federally approved data encryption. Access to the survey data will be restricted to approved staff at ACF and authorized Contractor study team

members who will monitor data collection. No personally identifiable information will be collected on the survey.

The screener (instrument 5) will be conducted via a web survey hosted on the recruiting panel SAGO's secure HTTP site Methodify. Sago is ISO 27001 certified, and as such, their operating systems and applications comply with high international and industry standards and best practices for data security and protection. Their systems are regularly updated with the latest stable releases and security patches, service packs, and hot fixes as they are made available by the vendors. No personally identifiable information will be collected for the screener.

SAGO complies with the EU-U.S. Data Privacy Framework (EU-U.S. DPF) and the UK Extension to the EU-U.S. DPF as set forth by the U.S. Department of Commerce. In the United States, SAGO adheres to all relevant federal and state privacy laws, including the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) and the amended California Privacy Rights Act (CPRA). SAGO uses physical, electronic, and procedural safeguards when collecting and storing data, encrypting transmissions using secure socket layer (SSL) technology.

Data Analysis

The contractor team will use thematic analysis for qualitative data and descriptive statistics to tabulate survey responses. No statistical tests are planned.

Use of Information Collected

ACF's contractor will synthesize the information from the virtual focus groups it conducts and the survey responses into a memo for internal ACF use. At a later time, ACF may use information from the focus groups and survey to develop publicly available guidance for grantees.

3. **Methods to Maximize Response Rates and Deal with Nonresponse**

Response Rates

The survey is not designed to produce statistically generalizable findings and participation is wholly at the respondent's discretion. Response rates will not be calculated or reported.

NonResponse

As participants will not be randomly sampled and findings are not intended to be representative, non-response bias will not be calculated. Respondent demographics will be documented to the extent feasible and reported in written materials associated with the data collection.

4. **Test of Procedures or Methods to be Taken**

Development of Data Collection Instruments

Because the use of AI in human services programs is an area of nascent study, ACF developed the data collection instruments in consultation with its contractor. Efforts were made to reduce respondent burden by limiting focus groups to only 60 minutes and limiting the survey to 5 minutes.

5. **Individuals Consulted on Statistical Aspects and Individuals Collecting and/or Analyzing Data**

Annalisa Mastri (amastri@mathematica-mpr.com) can answer questions about the statistical aspects of the information collection. In addition, the following people will collect, process, and/or analyze the resulting information:
- Caitlin Lowery (ACF, OPRE)
- Lauren Griffin (ACF, OPRE)
- Nicole Deterding (ACF, OPRE)
- Joshua Williams (ACF, OPRE)
- Jane Yang (ACF, OCIO)
- Heather Zaveri (contractor, Mathematica)
- Megan Shoji (contractor, Mathematica)
- Samantha Vance (contractor, Mathematica)
- Katie Hunter (contractor, Mathematica)
- Tiffany Waits (contractor, Mathematica)

Attachments

- Instrument 1: Focus groups with state leaders and others
- Instrument 2: Focus groups with public benefit participants
- Instrument 3: Survey of AI opinions—participants
- Instrument 4: Survey of AI opinions—nonparticipants
- Instrument 5: Screener for participants
- Appendix 1: Outreach materials